REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections with respect the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Initially, Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for her indication of allowance of claims 8 and 9 as originally submitted. In addition, Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for her indication that claims 2-6 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this amendment, claim 2 has been canceled and the subject matter contained therein has been incorporated into original independent claim 1 which should make claims 3-6 allowable as per the Examiner's indication.

It is also believed that claim 7 is allowable as well since it would now be dependent on an allowable base claim 1.

New claim 10 has been added which includes the subject matter of base claim 6 together with the original independent claim 1. It is believed that this combination of claims 1 and 6 is also allowable as indicated by the Examiner.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims of the present application, namely, claims 1, 3-9 and new claim 10 are distinguishable over the cited art of record and are in proper condition for allowance. Accordingly, passage of the application to issue at an early date is earnestly solicited.

New FEE SHEET authorizing the Office to charge fees to our deposit account is included herein since the number of Independent Claims has increased from three to four. If it is determined that any additional fee is required for entry of the present amendment, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such fee to Deposit Account No. <u>21-0550</u> in the name of United States Surgical Corporation.

Respectfully submitted,

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